

## THEATER



The cast of the comedy "Hay Fever," directed by Murray McGibbon, performs during dress rehearsals Monday. The "delicious comedy of bad manners" opens this Friday at the Ruth N. Halls Theatre.

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BRITISH ACTRESS SANDRA DUNCAN TO JOIN IU STUDENTS ON STAGE. LAUGHTER DELIVERS BEST MEDICINE FOR

# 'Hay Fever'

BY TAYLOR SMITH  
smithtay@indiana.edu

Director Murray McGibbon never directs college productions. He directs plays.

On Nov. 12, the Ruth N. Halls Theatre will become the venue for a band of ill-behaved British characters from the 1920s, engaging in a fast paced comedy of bad manners in Noel Coward's play "Hay Fever."

McGibbon, who has been teaching and directing theater at IU for 15 years, came to Bloomington from South Africa with a passion for Coward.

In addition to being a famous playwright, Coward was also a singer, composer and director.

If you were to examine McGibbon's CD collection or attend one of his acting classes, you would find evidence of Coward.

"It's a labor of love," McGibbon said. "He is a playwright I adore."

McGibbon said directing "Hay Fever" has been an exciting challenge for him as he has guided a cast of college students to become a comical bunch of eccentric Brits from the 1920s.

But there is nothing complicated to this play, which McGibbon described as a "gentle walk in the park, a stroll down the Champs Elysees."

McGibbon said the beauty of the play is that there is no concrete message.

#### 'HAY FEVER'

WHEN 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m. Nov. 16 through Nov. 20 and a matinee performance at 2 p.m. Nov. 20

WHERE Ruth N. Halls Theatre, Lee Norvelle Theatre & Drama Center, 275 N. Jordan Ave.

ADMISSION Regular admission is \$22 for adults, \$15 for students, \$16 for senior citizens; Student rush tickets are \$10 with cash and a valid IUB student ID on the day of each performance.



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Performing during dress rehearsals for Hay Fever, professional British actress Sandra Duncan plays central role Judith Bliss as Henry A. McDaniel III watches as David Bliss on Monday at the Ruth N. Halls Theatre. The comedy is directed by associate professor of acting Murray McGibbon.



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Sophomore theater majors Brianna McClellan, playing Myra Arundel, and Thomas Beaver, playing Simon Bliss, perform during a dress rehearsal of the comedy Hay Fever on Monday at the Ruth N. Halls Theatre. Opening Friday, the play profiles the life of a 1920s eccentric English family and their unsuspecting guests.



# From Berlin to Bloomington

## DEFA to showcase East German films

BY LIBBY PETERSON  
elijupete@indiana.edu

Starting Nov. 14, the IU DEFA Project will present DEFA Dialogues, a series of five film screenings and discussions. These films, however, are not ordinary films. In fact, many of them were thought to be lost after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and they focus on East Germany, a country that no longer exists.

Before the fall of the Wall, East German filmmakers were up against imposing control from the government.

"The films at that period were funded by the state, so the government had a significant role in how the films were made," said Brigitta Wagner, the director of the 2010 DEFA Project and an assistant professor in the Germanic studies and cinema, communications and culture and film studies departments. "The East German directors didn't have as much creative freedom, so they would use coded references to get their messages beyond the authorities."

After the collapse of the Wall, the East German citizens realized they were no longer confined to East German films — they could watch whatever they wanted.

"The films made in the East tackled difficult subjects," Wagner said. "The people didn't want to watch films about how difficult life was like in East Germany; they wanted to put that behind them."

Thus, the status of the East German filmmakers fell, and their films were lost.

"But now, 20 years after the Cold War ended, their stories have become much more interesting," Wagner said.

The DEFA Foundation in Berlin is charged by the German government to protect and preserve the films of DEFA, the former East German film studios before and immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The only DEFA Film Library outside of Europe is located at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

However, last spring, Wagner created the IU DEFA Project, a group that works to showcase DEFA's films.

"I just thought, 'Let's be one of those campuses that does something with these films,'" Wagner said. "Let's make these recovered films relevant to young people and to the Bloomington community and anticipate this new cinema with films that no one has ever seen before."

IU DEFA member graduate student Jan Steele said the best part about the spring film screenings was that they attracted a wide variety of attendees.

This fall, the Project is moving on to DEFA Dialogues, a presentation of five specially selected films. Three of the screenings will feature special guests and all of them will include a discussion

of the film after the screening.

"As one of the first series co-presented by the IU Cinema, DEFA Dialogues will give audiences a first taste of a different kind of movie-going experience," Steele said.

To select the films, Wagner met with Helmut Morsbach, the head of the DEFA Foundation in Berlin, and asked him which films would be particularly interesting and different to show.

Of the films he offered her, Wagner selected "Locked Up Time" (1990), "Carbide and Sorrel" (1963), "Vorspiel" (1987), "Windows on Monday" (2006) and "Sammelsurium" (1992).

The films, whose topics range from the activities of the East German Stasi secret police to the experiences of being young in East Germany, will each be shown on campus in mid-November and early December.

The screenings are free and open to the public, and all of the films will be accompanied by English subtitles. Although three of the films were already subtitled before the series was set into motion, "Vorspiel" and "Sammelsurium" have been subtitled especially for the IU DEFA Project based on the request of Indiana's high school students who took part in the Project's student symposium last spring.

"The fact that these two films have been subtitled for us is especially exciting," Wagner said. "Now, these films will be released in the U.S. and will be more available for the English-speaking audience, and these are films that almost no one has ever seen before. That's special, that's really special."

Wagner said not only is it exciting to see films that have rarely been seen before, but there is particular intrigue in the fact that they come from a country that no longer exists.

"Austria is still Austria; Poland is still Poland; East Germany is not still East Germany," Wagner said. "Thousands of films are made every year, but now and then, it's important to look at cinematic history during a time that had a change that came so quickly. It's easy to forget what they were thinking at the time and what the future looked like for them."

Even though DEFA Dialogues invites everyone to see the screenings, Wagner said younger people should take a special interest in the series.

"Students and teens these days were born in the late '80s and early '90s when the Cold War ended, the Berlin Wall fell and German unification began," Wagner said. "They might not know so much about the time in which they were born, and this is a great opportunity to see what was going on in the world at that time. It's important to be aware, and there's nothing better than meeting the people who lived through it."

### 'LOCKED UP TIME' (1990)

WHEN 3 p.m. Nov. 14  
WHERE Whittenberger Auditorium Helmut Morsbach, the head of the DEFA Foundation in Berlin, will introduce the film and lead a Q&A session after the screening.

"Locked Up Time" was created by a female filmmaker named Sybille Schönemann who was locked up by the Stasi, East Germany's secret police.

"I think many people became strangely fascinated by the activities of the East German Stasi secret police when they saw the Oscar-winning 2006 German movie 'The Lives of Others,'" IU DEFA member graduate student Jan Steele said. "For me, that fiction film raised a lot of questions, and I'm eager to watch the 1990 documentary 'Locked Up Time' to see another perspective and perhaps a more realistic glimpse of someone coming to terms with why the secret police arrested and imprisoned her."

### 'CARBIDE AND SORREL' (1963)

WHEN 7 p.m. Nov. 15  
WHERE Fine Arts Auditorium This film was included in the series at the suggestion of filmmaker Peter Kahane and film critic, writer and radio figure Knut Elstermann, who both said this film got under their skin and made them want to work in cinema. Kahane and Elstermann will lead a discussion following the screening.

### 'VORSPIEL' (1987)

WHEN 7 p.m. Nov. 16  
WHERE Fine Arts Auditorium Elstermann will lead an interview with filmmaker Kahane after the screening. This is a film that focuses on the youth in East Germany.

"If you fondly remember the chaos that ensued when you had a crush on someone and would do anything to get that person's attention, you won't want to miss Vorspiel," Steele said.

As playful as it might seem, Wagner said the youth is depicted in a strikingly honest way.

"They're frustrated with their lives. They have dreams, and they love," said Brigitta Wagner, the director of the 2010 DEFA Project. "There's vulnerability in the film that youth everywhere can relate to."

### 'WINDOWS ON MONDAY' (2006) AND 'SAMMELSURIUM' (1992)

WHEN 7 p.m. Dec. 1 and 2  
WHERE Fine Arts Auditorium Both films came out of the production company, the Berlin School, which showcases a new movement of filmmaking that harbors the younger, more contemporary filmmakers of East Germany.

"A lot of the films that come out of the Berlin School focus on life in the city or suburbs and family," Wagner said. "They're made in a dark way but with an artistic sensibility."

Members of IU's German Studies will lead a discussion following the films.



CHAZ MOTTINGER | IDS

British actress Sandra Duncan performs during dress rehearsal as Judith Bliss with junior Tyrone Van Tatenhove as Sandy Tyrell in the comedy "Hay Fever" directed by Murray McGibbon on Monday at the Ruth N. Halls Theatre.

### » FEVER

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"If you are human and know how good it is to laugh, everyone can enjoy it," McGibbon said.

IU's production will also feature the American debut of renowned British actress Susan Duncan.

Born in Liverpool, England, and trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Duncan has entertained countless audiences in England and South Africa, where she won 15 "best actress" awards.

After working with Duncan in South Africa, McGibbon asked her if she would be interested in making the trip to the Midwest.

Duncan replied with an

enthusiastic "Yes."

After arriving in Bloomington on Oct. 7, Duncan's first steps on U.S. soil have been filled with four intense weeks of rehearsals.

The members of the IU Department of Theatre and Drama is thrilled to have Duncan as part of their production. McGibbon describes her as being in a class of her own.

After playing the role of Judith Bliss at the Pitlochry Festival Theatre in Scotland 12 years ago, she said this production is a completely different play than her previous experience.

"The students are not professionals, and it's wonderful," Duncan said. "It's everything I hoped and more."

With a less rigid production,

Duncan said she has more opportunities to become an extra outrageous character.

"It's a very silly play — saucy and light," Duncan said.

In her British accent, Duncan described Bliss as a "scaffy" woman who can switch into drama mode at the drop of a hat.

"This has been huge fun for me," Duncan said. "It's been strenuous, but it has kept me active."

This weekend, McGibbon said the actors will take the audience to a stress-free, humor-filled environment, just as Coward intended his audience to experience the play years ago.

"After London was bombed to bits in World War II, Coward wrote plays to cheer

"If you are human and know how good it is to laugh, everyone can enjoy it."

Murray McGibbon, Director of 'Hay Fever'

people up," McGibbon said. "His plays still cheer people up. It's pure, unadulterated fluff."

The play, which is considered a period piece, is one that Duncan feels the audience should embrace. Whether it is curiosity or desire, the style of "Hay Fever" should not be missed.

"It's all a big laugh," Duncan said. "I hope they'll enjoy it."

# 10 BEST OF BLOOMINGTON

TENTH ANNIVERSARY: 2001-2010

Best Burger \_\_\_\_\_

Best Ethnic Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_

Best Place for Ice Cream/Dessert \_\_\_\_\_

Best Late-Night Munchies \_\_\_\_\_

Best Local Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_

Best New Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_

Best Coffee Shop \_\_\_\_\_

Best Campus Food Court \_\_\_\_\_

Best Pizza \_\_\_\_\_

Best Place to Take a Date \_\_\_\_\_

Best Annual Event \_\_\_\_\_

Best Campus Philanthropy \_\_\_\_\_

Best Student Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Best Greek House \_\_\_\_\_

Best Place to Meet Singles \_\_\_\_\_

Best Place for a Hair Cut/Style \_\_\_\_\_

Best Place to Take Visiting Parents \_\_\_\_\_

Best Local Shop \_\_\_\_\_

Best Student Athlete \_\_\_\_\_

Best Music Venue \_\_\_\_\_

Best Local Band \_\_\_\_\_

Best Bar \_\_\_\_\_

Best Local Drink \_\_\_\_\_

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